

Welcome to the Office of the Attorney General!

This brochure is intended to help you understand the roles and the duties of the



Attorney General's Office as they affect the people of Washington State.

Who is the Attorney General?

The Attorney General is the top legal officer for state government, elected by the public for a four-year term. Attorney General Christine O. Gregoire currently is serving her third term. She is Washington's 16th state Attorney General and the first woman elected to the position in state history.

What does the Attorney General's Office do?

The Attorney General's Office impacts the lives, livelihoods and quality of life for all the people of Washington. As chief legal officer, the Attorney General leads a team of lawyers who represent state clients and the public interest.

According to state law, the Office of the Attorney General is responsible for representing the state of Washington, its officials, departments, boards, commissions, and agencies. Its specific duties include:

- Representing the State of Washington before the Supreme Court, the Court of Appeals, and trial courts in all the cases that involve the state's interest;
- Defending in court state officers or employees acting in their official capacities;
- Investigating and prosecuting persons accused of crimes if requested to do so by the Governor or a county prosecutor;
- Advising the Governor, members of the Legislature, other state officers, and county prosecutors on legal issues, and,

when requested, giving written opinions on constitutional or legal questions; and

- Protecting the public by upholding the Consumer Protection Act, enforcing laws against anti-competitive business practices, and representing the public interest in utility matters.

AGO Quick Facts:

- The AGO serves more than 230 state agencies, boards, commissions, colleges, and universities, as well as the Governor and Legislature.
- In addition to being chief legal officer, the Attorney General is responsible for managing what amounts to the largest law office in the state: one with more than 1,000 employees, a budget of approximately \$75 million a year, and offices in 12 cities around the state.

What does the Attorney General's Office NOT do?

The Attorney General's Office is not responsible for representing city, county, or other local units of government.

State law prohibits the Attorney General, deputy attorneys general, and assistant attorneys general from engaging in the private practice of law. This means that they cannot represent private citizens in court either to bring an action on behalf of an individual, or to defend an individual. Any private citizen needing such representation should consult a private attorney.

In addition, the Attorney General's Office is not authorized to provide advice to private citizens on personal legal matters. While the office may answer questions of a general nature, most private issues require a detailed analysis of the law, and such services are outside the scope of the office's authority.

If you do not already know an attorney in your area, the Attorney Referral Service at 1-800-878-7485 can direct you to one.

Important Contact Information

Main Office

Phone: 1- 360-753-6200

Email: www.atg.wa.gov/cog_contact.shtml

Write:

1125 Washington St. SE

PO Box 40100

Olympia, WA 98504-0100

Consumer Protection

Statewide toll-free number:

1-800-551-4636

State-wide toll-free TDD:

1-800-276-9883

Email: protect@atg.wa.gov

(please include your US mail address with email complaints)

Antitrust Division

Phone: 1-206-464-7744

Email: monopoly@atg.wa.gov

Write:

Office of the Attorney General

Antitrust Division

900 Fourth Ave. Suite 2000

MS TB-14

Seattle, WA. 98164-1012

Public Counsel (utility regulation)

Phone: 1-206-464-6907

Email: utility@atg.wa.gov

Write:

Attorney General's Office

Public Counsel Section

900 4th Ave., Suite 2000

MS TB-14

Seattle, WA 98164-1012

Office of the Attorney General



An Introduction to the AGO